

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NEA-07 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05
CIAE-00 PM-03 DODE-00 PRS-01 SP-02 EUR-08 /050 W
-----311536Z 060138 /43

R 301625Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3410
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

S E C R E T CAIRO 5441

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR CG CU UR OAU EG
SUBJ: EGYPTIAN VIEWS ON "INVASION" OF ZAIRE

1. DIRECTOR MFA AFRICAN DEPARTMENT AHAMAD SIDQI TOLD EMBOFFS
MARCH 30 THAT CURRENT "INVASION" OF SHABA IS, IN GOE VIEW, PART
OF "BRUTAL OFFENSIVE" BEING WAGED BY USSR AND ITS CUBAN
SURROGATE THROUGHOUT AFRICA. HE EXPECTS FIGHTING TO BE PROTRACTED
AND DOUBTS THAT MOBUTU IS STRONG ENOUGH TO COPE WITH IT.
ACCORDING TO GOE INFORMATION, MOST OF ZAIRE ARMY IS COMPLETELY
DEMORALIZED AND CRACK TROOPS WILL BE KEPT BY MOBUTU IN
KINSHASA TO PROTECT REGIME. MOBUTU'S INABILITY TO DEAL WITH
SITUATION IS ALSO RESULT OF LONGSTANDING MISMANAGEMENT AND
CORRUPTION.

2. ZAIRIAN FONMIN NGUZA HAD REQUESTED GOE ASSISTANCE DURING
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MARCH 24 CISIT TO CAIRO AND GOE HAS AGREED IN PRINCIPLE TO
PROVIDE SOME (UNSPECIFIED). NGUZA HAD SAID ZAIRE HAD NOT
INTENTION OF ASKING OAU TO TAKE ACTION SINCE IT KNOWS ORGANIZATION
WOULD BE HOPELESSLY DIVIDED. MFA HAD GIVEN ZAIRE EXPRESSION OF
POLITICAL SUPPORT BY ARRANGING FOR PUBLICATION OF FOLLOWING
ARTICLE IN AHRAH MARCH 26 BY DIPLOMATIC EDITOR: "DANGEROUS
EVENTS IN AFRICA ARE DUE TO FACT THAT MERCENARIES BEING USED

IN MILITARY OPERATIONS TO OCCUPY LAND F AN AFRICAN COUNTRY
IN CONTRADICTION TO AFRO-ARAB SUMMIT DECLARATION WHICH CONDEMNS.
USE OF MERCENARIES. AGRESSIVE OPERATIONS ON LAND OF AFRICAN
COUNTRY THREATENS ITS FREEDOM AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY,
ESPECIALLY WHEN THIS AGRESSION IS INSTIGATED BY FOREIGN ELEMENTS.
GOVERNMENT OF ZAIRE TRIED TO AVOID CLASH WITH ANGOLA AND IT
DISARMED THE ANGOLA REFUGEES WITHIN ITS TERRITORIES WHIEL
ANGOLA AGREED TO DO THE SAME. DESPITE THIS, A PLANNED AGGRESSION
OCCURRED ON MARCH 11 BY AN ARMY OF 6,000 MERCENARIES SAID
TO HAVE BEEN TRAINED BY CUBAN EXPERTS. THIS ARMY HAS SEIZED
THREE VILLAGES AND INFILTRATED INTO SOME 400 (SQ.) KILOMETERS.
SIMILAR ATTEMPTS WERE MADE DURING THE DAYS OF TSHOMBE TO SEPARATE
KATANGA AND ALL NATIONS OF AFRICA CONDEMNED THEM. THE DANGER OF
THESE INCIDENTS IS THAT THEY DISTRACT AFRICAN NATIONS FROM
THEIR REAL PROBLEMS AND BRING IN FOREIGN CURRENTS WHICH HINDER
THE ACHIEVEMENT OF INDEPENDENT, UNITED CONTINENT."

3. SIDQI WAS PESSIMISTIC ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR RESOLVING CONFLICT.
HE WAS SKEPTICAL OF NIGERIAN MEDIATION BECAUSE HE FELT, IN FACT,
NIGERIA WAS NOT UNHAPPY TO SEE TWO OF ITS MAJOR RIVALS BEING
WEAKENED. HE HELD OUT NO HOPE FOR OAU ACTION AND SAID THAT
EVEN INDIVIDUAL AFRICAN STATES WERE NOT STRONG OR STABLE
ENOUGH TO SPEAK OUT FIRMLY AGAINST SOVIET/CUBAN SPONSORED
INVASION (SIDQI MENTIONED IN PASSING THAT OAU SEC GEN ETEKI
WOULD BE IN ZAIRE SHORTLY AND WOULD BE COMING TO CAIRO ON
APRIL 4 TO DISCUSS IMPLEMENTATION OF AFRO-ARAB SUMMIT DECISIONS).
NOT ONLY DID SIDQI SEE LITTLE POSSIBILITY OF SOLUTION BUT HE
FELT THAT CONTINUATION OF FIGHTING WOULD INVITABLY LEAD TO
ENCOURAGEMENT OF OTHER SEPARATIST MOVEMENTS IN ZAIRE AND
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INSTABILITY IN OTHER STATES OF CENTRAL AFRICA, BOTH OF WHICH
OF COURSE CONSONANT WITH SOVIET OBJECTIVES.

4. SIDQI WENT ON TO SAY THAT GOE WAS EVEN MORE CONCERNED WITH
"SOVIET/CUBAN OFFENSIVE" IN NORTHEAST AFRICA. GOE HAD REASON
TO THINK THAT FOLLOWING CASTRO'S VISIT TO LIBYA POSSIBILITY OF
CUBAN MILITARY TECHNICIANS BEING SENT TO LIBYA WAS VERY REAL.
IN ADDITION, SOVIETS WERE MAKING MAJOR POWER PLAY TO ESTABLISH
THEMSELVES IN ETHIOPIA AND IF THEY COULD KEEP MENGISTU IN
POWER FOR ANOTHER FOUR OR FIVE MONTHS FIRST PHASE OF STRUGGLE
WOULD HAVE BEEN WON BY SOVIETS (SEPTEL). PODGORNYY AND CASTRO
AFRICAN TRIPS CLEARLY DEMONSTRATE THAT SOVIETS DETERMINED TO
PRESS FORWARD THEIR OFFENSIVE SUCCESSFULLY BEGUN IN ANGOLA.
HE SAID AFRICANS WERE VIRTUALLY POWERLESS TO ACT, AND IT WAS
UP TO US AS SUPERPOWER TO PROTECT ITS INTERESTS. HE DEPLORED
WHAT HE VIEWED AS US PASSIVITY TOWARD CUBAN AND SOVIET ACTIVITIES
AND SAID AFRICANS ARE EXTREMELY PUZZLED BY APPARENT US MOVES
TOWARD NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH CUBA, INCLUDING FREEDOM
OF AMCITS TO TRAVEL THERE, AT TIME THAT CUBA ACTIVELY WORKING AGAINST

US INTERESTS IN AFRICA.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PROVINCE, INVASIONS, COMBAT OPERATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 30-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977CAIRO05441
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770110-0972
Format: TEL
From: CAIRO
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t1977038/aaaaagow.tel
Line Count: 118
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 1c735ebb-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21-Jan-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3168515
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EGYPTIAN VIEWS ON \"INVASION\" OF ZAIRE
TAGS: PFOR, MOPS, CG, CU, UR, EG, OAU
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/1c735ebb-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009